UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/679,819	10/06/2003	Robert R. O'Brien	50037.200US01	3404

27488 7590 07/09/2008

MERCHANT & GOULD (MICROSOFT)
P.O. BOX 2903
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-0903

EXAMINER	
DAILEY, THOMAS J	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2152	

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
07/09/2008	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/679,819	O'BRIEN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	THOMAS J. DAILEY	2152	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *02 April 2008*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-3,6-14 and 16-25* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-3,6-14 and 16-25* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 22-25 were added by the amendment filed on April 2, 2008.
2. Claims 1-3, 6-14, and 16-25 are pending.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments filed April 2, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

4. The applicant argues with respect to claim 1-3, 6-14, and 16-25 that Porter et al (US Pat 6,181,781 B1), hereafter "Porter," and "Ring Central Products: PhoneWorks 2002" (Dated: September 30, 2002, accessed via www.archive.org at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20020603180111/ringcentral.com/products/pw2002.asp>), hereafter "Phoneworks," fail to teach generating, on the notification server, a personal unique identifier (PUID) that identifies a subscriber registered with the notification server, a registered mailbox, and a notification channel; correlating the identifier associated with the event to the registered mailbox in order to identify the PUID; generating an alert; and sending the alert to the subscriber indicating that the event occurred in accordance with the identified notification channel. Specifically, the applicant contends that the PUID is distinct from the mailbox number recited in Porter.

5. The examiner disagrees with the contention that Porter and Phoneworks do not disclose the claimed invention. However, the examiner does agree that the PUID, as now recited, is distinct from the mailbox number recited in Porter. Nonetheless, Porter discloses a user profile that now reads on the claim's PUID. Specifically, Porter discloses:

generating, on the notification server, a personal unique identifier (PUID) that identifies a subscriber registered with the notification server, a registered mailbox, and a notification channel (column 5, lines 32-38, a user profile identifies a user and their mailbox and further column 5, lines 48-54 discloses that in the user profile is stored information related to how a user will be notified of voicemail messages, i.e. a notification channel)

correlating the identifier associated with the event to the registered mailbox in order to identify the PUID (column 5, lines 32-44, incoming voicemail message will be associated with a mailbox number (the identifier) and that mailbox number correlates to a certain user's profile), and

generating sending an alert to the subscriber indicating that the event occurred in accordance with the identified notification channel (column 5, lines 48-54, notification email is sent to user; email being selected as the notification channel by the user and stored along with other information in the user profile).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-3, 6-8, 10-14, 16-17, 19-22, 24, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Porter et al (US Pat 6,181,781 B1), hereafter "Porter," in view of "Ring Central Products: PhoneWorks 2002" (Dated: September 30, 2002, accessed via www.archive.org at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20020603180111/ringcentral.com/products/pw2002.asp>), hereafter "Phoneworks."

8. As to claim 1, Porter discloses a system for notifying a subscriber about an event (Abstract), comprising:

a voice mail switch (Fig. 3, label 380) that is configured to receive an event and a mailbox identifier associated with the event (column 5, lines 32-44, incoming voicemail message (event) will be associated with a mailbox number (mailbox identifier)); and

a notification server (Fig. 3, label 370) coupled to the voice mail switch that is configured to perform actions including:

obtaining a personal unique identifier (PUID) that identifies a notification channel and a subscriber identifier for the subscriber registered with the

notification server, wherein the PUID maps the subscriber identifier to a mailbox identifier (column 5, lines 32-38, a user profile identifies a user (i.e. a subscriber with an identifier, e.g. their extension number) and their mailbox and further column 5, lines 48-54 discloses that in the user profile is stored information related to how a user will be notified of voicemail messages, i.e. a notification channel),

receiving an event and an mailbox identifier from the voice mail switch (column 5, lines 32-44, incoming voicemail message (event) will be associated with a mailbox number (mailbox identifier))

correlating the mailbox identifier associated with the event with the PUID, wherein the PUID identifies the subscriber identifier and the notification channel (column 5, lines 32-44, incoming voicemail message will be associated with a mailbox number (the mailbox identifier) and that mailbox number correlates to a certain user's profile with a subscriber identifier, e.g. a extension number);

generating an alert (column 5, lines 47-54, email reads on "alert"); and

sending the alert to the subscriber indicating that the event occurred according to the notification channel indicated by the PUID (column 5, lines 47-54, notification email is sent to user; email being selected as the notification channel by the user and stored along with other information in the user profile).

But, Porter does not disclose the notification server is coupled to a plurality of voice mail switches and further mapping the PUID that identifies a subscriber registered with the notification server to a plurality of identifiers, wherein at least one of the plurality of identifiers is associated with a different voice mail switch than the other of the plurality of identifiers. Rather, Porter's invention only explicitly relates to notification with one voice mail switch and therefore there is no need from mapping multiple voice mail switch identifiers to a PUID.

However, PhoneWorks discloses a system for notifying a subscriber about an event including a notification server coupled to a plurality of voice mail switches (page 2, lines 35-40, "Notification and Forwarding…" and page 2, line 17 ("Complete voice mail system supports an unlimited number of voice mailboxes") discloses the use of multiple voice mail boxes) and further mapping a person unique identifier that identifies a subscriber registered with the notification server to a plurality of identifiers, wherein at least one of the plurality of identifiers is associated with a different voice mail switch than the other of the plurality of identifiers (page 1, lines 17-23, "Microsoft Outlook and Outlook Express synchronization…", and page 2, line 17, "Complete voice mail system supports an unlimited number of voice mailboxes," as the system integrates with Microsoft outlook, the user ID associated with Outlook reads on a PUID, and identifiers associated with voice mailboxes (e.g., the mail box numbers) are synchronized with the user ID that is associated Outlook).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Porter and Phoneworks in order to allow notification from more than one voicemail accounts thereby eliminating the need for individual notification means for each voice mail account.

9. As to claim 13 and 20, they are rejected by a similar rationale set forth in claim 1's rejection.

10. As to claim 22, Porter discloses a computer-implemented method for notifying a subscriber about an event, the method comprising:

receiving mailbox registration information for a plurality of mailboxes (column 5, lines 32-44, a user registers their mailbox with the DirectTalkMail voice messaging system); and;

receiving user registration information, wherein the user registration information includes a subscriber identifier and at least one delivery channel (column 5, lines 32-38, a user profile identifies a user and their mailbox and further column 5, lines 48-54 discloses that in the user profile is stored information related to how a user will be notified of voicemail messages, i.e. a delivery channel);

storing, on a notification server, the mailbox registration information and the user registration information, wherein a personal unique identifier (PUID) is

generated on the notification server to correlate the mailbox registration information with the user registration information (column 5, lines 32-38, and column 5, lines 48-54;

receiving, on the notification server, a message event association with a mailbox identifier that identifies at least one of the plurality of mailboxes associated with the mailbox registration information (column 5, lines 32-44, incoming voicemail message (event) will be associated with a mailbox number (mailbox identifier));

matching, on the notification server, the mailbox identifier to the mailbox registration information to identify the generated PUID associated with the mailbox registration information (column 5, lines 32-44, incoming voicemail message (event) will be associated with a mailbox number (mailbox identifier), and each mailbox number is associated with a user profile (PUID));

accessing the user registration information associated with the generated PUID to identify the at least one delivery channel associated with the user registration information (column 5, lines 48-54 discloses that in the user profile (PUID) is stored information related to how a user will be notified of voicemail messages, i.e. a delivery channel);

generating an alert on the notification server that identifies the messaging event (column 5, lines 48-54, email (alert) is generated and sent to user); and

sending the alert via the at least one communication channel indicated in the user registration information that is identified by the generated PUID (column 5, lines 48-54, email (alert) is generated and sent to user).

But, Porter does not disclose at least one of the plurality of mailboxes is associated with a different messaging switch than the other of the plurality of mailboxes. Rather, Porter's invention only explicitly relates to notification with one voice mail switch.

However, PhoneWorks discloses a system for notifying a subscriber about an event including a notification server coupled to a plurality of voice mail switches (page 2, lines 35-40, "Notification and Forwarding…" and page 2, line 17 ("Complete voice mail system supports an unlimited number of voice mailboxes") discloses the use of multiple voice mail boxes) and further mapping a person unique identifier that identifies a subscriber registered with the notification server to a plurality of identifiers, wherein at least one of the plurality of identifiers is associated with a different voice mail switch than the other of the plurality of identifiers (page 1, lines 17-23, "Microsoft Outlook and Outlook Express synchronization…", and page 2, line 17, "Complete voice mail system supports an unlimited number of voice mailboxes," as the system integrates with Microsoft outlook, the user ID associated with Outlook reads on a PUID, and identifiers

associated with voice mailboxes (e.g., the mail box numbers) are synchronized with the user ID that is associated Outlook).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Porter and Phoneworks in order to allow notification from more than one voicemail accounts thereby eliminating the need for individual notification means for each voice mail account.

11. As to claims 2 and 14, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claims 1 and 13, and further disclose where the alert (Porter, Fig. 5, label 580) includes an event reference (Porter, Fig. 5, label 588) that links the subscriber to the event such that the subscriber can retrieve the event through a web portal view associated with a URL (Porter, column 12, lines 61-67 and column 13, lines 1-7).

12. As to claim 3, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 1, and further disclose where the notification server is further configured to generate the personal unique identifier (PUID) associated with the subscriber identifier (Porter, column 3, lines 15-21, Porter's "mailbox number" reads on the PUID).

13. As to claim 6, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 1, and further disclose a web service interface (Porter, Fig. 3, label 330) that is configured to allow the subscriber to register to receive the alert (Porter, column 5, lines 48-61).

14. As to claim 7, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 6, and further disclose a web service interface (Porter, Fig. 3, label 330) that is further configured to allow the subscriber to designate at least one destination where the alert is sent (Porter, column 5, lines 48-61).

15. As to claim 8, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 1, and further disclose where the notification server is further configured to log the event after the alert is generated (Porter, column 2, lines 33-36, Porter's act of storing the incoming message is logging the event).

16. As to claim 10, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 1, and further disclose where the identifier is a telephone number associated with the event (Porter, column 2, lines 33-36, it is well in the art that an event, a telephone call in Porter's voice mail system (or any voice mail system), will have a telephone number to identify it).

17. As to claim 11, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 1, and further disclose where the event is at least one of: a voice mail message, a stock price, a sports score, a product delivery message, a fax, or telephone billing information (Porter, column 1, lines 9-12 and column 2, lines 33-36, Porter's event is the "messages from incoming calls").

18. As to claim 12, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 1, and further disclose where the voicemail switch comprises a data store (Porter, Fig 3, label 390) for storing the events (Porter, column 5, lines 32-39, events are the "messages from incoming calls" and are stored as "digitised stored messages").

19. As to claim 16, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 13, and further disclose determining if the subscriber is registered to receive the alert (Porter, column 2, lines 33-36, Porter's act of storing the incoming message is logging the event).

20. As to claim 17, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 13, and further disclose logging the event (Porter, column 2, lines 33-36).

21. As to claim 19, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 13, and further disclose sending the alert to at least one destination designated by the notification channel (Porter, column 5, lines 48-61).

22. As to claim 21, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 20, and further disclose a system comprising a means for linking the subscriber to the event through a network via a URL (Porter, column 12, lines 61-67), and a means for retrieving the event through a web portal view that is associated with the URL (Porter, column 12, lines 63-67 and column 13, lines 1-7).

23. As to claim 24, Porter and Phoneworks disclose:

receiving, on the notification server, a plurality of message events association with a plurality of mailbox identifiers, wherein each of the plurality of mailbox identifiers identifies at least one of the plurality of mailboxes associated with the mailbox registration information (Porter, column 5, lines 33-44);

matching, on the notification server, the mailbox identifiers to the mailbox registration information to identify the generated PUID associated with the mailbox registration information (Porter, column 5, lines 33-44);

accessing the user registration information associated with the generated PUID to identify a delivery channel associated with the user registration information (Porter, column 5, lines 47-54);

generating a plurality of alerts on the notification server wherein each of the plurality of alerts identifies one of the plurality of message events (Porter, column 5, lines 47-59); and

sending the plurality of alerts via the delivery channel indicated in the user registration information that is identified by the generated PUID (Porter, column 5, lines 47-59).

24. As to claim 25, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the notification server bridges a web server interface and the at least one of the plurality of mailboxes, wherein the notification server does not have access to subscriber information and a telephone carrier associated with a messaging switch does not have access to the generated PUID (column 5, lines 33-44).

25. Claims 9 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Porter in view of Phoneworks, as applied to claims 1,13, and 14 above in view of Guthrie et al. (US Pat. No. 6,161,185) hereafter “Guthrie”.

26. As to claim 9, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 1, and further disclose where the notification server is

configured to determine if the subscriber has registered to receive the alert (Porter, column 5, lines 54-61) and discarding the event when the identifier does not correlate to the subscriber (it is well known in the art that if an event is received at voice mail system (or any subscriber system) that is not associated with a subscriber that event will be discarding).

Porter and Phoneworks does not explicitly teach logging an attempt to correlate the identifier with the subscriber.

Guthrie teaches a server logging an attempt to correlate the identifier with the subscriber (column 13, lines 46-56).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Porter and Phoneworks with Guthrie in order for an operator of Porter's system to have a greater understanding of the operation of the system, i.e. the operator will be aware of what the system has done even when they are not present, resulting in enhanced control of the system.

27. As to claim 18, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 13, and further disclose discarding the event when the identifier does not correlate to the subscriber (column 1, lines 9-12 and column 2, lines 33-36, it is well known in the art that if an event is received at voice mail

system (or any subscriber system) that is not associated with a subscriber that event will be discarding).

Porter and Phoneworks does not explicitly teach logging an attempt to correlate the identifier with the subscriber.

Guthrie teaches logging an attempt to correlate the identifier with the subscriber (column 13, lines 46-56).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Porter and Phoneworks with Guthrie in order for an operator of Porter's system to have a greater understanding of the operation of the system, i.e. the operator will be aware of what the system has done even when they are not present, resulting in enhanced control of the system.

28. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Porter in view of Phoneworks, as applied to claim 22 above, in further view of what was well known and expected at the time of the invention.

29. As to claim 23, Porter and Phoneworks disclose the invention substantially with regard to the parent claim 22, but do not explicitly disclose the mailbox identifier is matched to a second generated PUID that correlates second mailbox

registration information with second user registration information, wherein a second alert is sent via at least one communication channel indicated in the second user registration information that is indicated by the second generated PUID.

However, Official Notice is taken (see MPEP 2144.03) that allowing two user profiles to be associated with one mailbox would have been an obvious modification to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, given Porter and Phonework's explicit teachings, and would have allowed persons who share a common mailbox the ability to be notified when a voicemail is present in it. Simply allowing a second user access to a voice mailbox and any notifications indicating a voicemail is present in said voice mailbox would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art as a person with ordinary skill has good reason to pursue the known options within his or her technical grasp (i.e. associated more than one user profile with the same mailbox) and when this leads to anticipated success, it is likely the product not of innovation but of ordinary skill and common sense.

Conclusion

30. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP §

706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

31. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

32. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas J. Dailey whose telephone number is 571-270-1246. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday; 9:00am - 5:00pm.

33. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bunjob Jaroenchonwanit can be reached on 571-272-3913. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

34. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/T. J. D./
Examiner, Art Unit 2152

/Bunjob Jaroenchonwanit/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2152